

Serial No. 10/026,541
Amdt. dated March 18, 2004
Reply to Office Action of December 18, 2003

Docket No. K-0378

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3, 5, 6, 8-10, 12-13, 15, 17-19, and 21 are pending in the application. By this Amendment, claims 24-27 are canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Reconsideration in view of the above amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Applicant sincerely acknowledges the Office Action's indication that claims 1, 3, 5-6, 8-10, 12-13, 15, 17-19, and 21 define patentable subject matter. However, for at least the following reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that all pending claims define patentable subject matter and the application is in condition for allowance.

The Office Action rejects claims 24-27 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 6,005,722 to Butterworth et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,343,862 to Sawai et al., and U.S. Patent No. 5,884,991 to Lewis et al. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Applicant respectfully submits that the rejection is moot as claims 24-27 are canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Withdrawal of the of the rejection of claims 24-27 under 35 U.S.C. §103 is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes that any additional changes would place the application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney, **Carl R. Wesolowski**, at the telephone number listed below.

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In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this, concurrent and future replies, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 16-0607 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,
FLESHNER & KIM, LLP



Carl R. Wesolowski
Registration No. 40,372

P.O. Box 221200
Chantilly, Virginia 20153-1200
703 766-3701 DYK/CRW:cre
Date: March 18, 2004

Please direct all correspondence to Customer Number 34610